

1608/429

THREE X
LETTERS

TO

D^r CLARKE,

FROM A

Clergyman of the Church of England;

Concerning this
Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity.

WITH THE

Doctor's Replies.

[JACKSON (John)]

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THREE LETTERS.

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1608/429

FROM A

Copy of the Church of England

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Handwritten notes in a rectangular box, mostly illegible.

THE LITURGICAL

THE LITURGICAL

THE
PREFACE,
TO THE
READER.

THe Doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, as reveal'd in Scripture, hath always been justly esteem'd a very important Truth of the Christian Faith; and those Errors very dangerous, that have been broach'd or entertain'd in Opposition to the true Profession of it. And whoever hath made any Enquiry into the state of the Church of Christ from the Beginning till now, will find that it hath been one of the most exquisite and resolv'd Devices of Satan all along, to distract and divide Christians in this Doctrine, on which he is well aware that the Glory of God and the Unity of the Church do so much depend. I therefore, by the Mercy of God, not only a Member, but Minister of his Church, thought it my Duty to employ my most serious Thoughts (earnestly begging Gods Grace to enlighten my Understanding and to remove all Prejudice and Partiality from my Heart, and to prevent and

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assist

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assist Me,) in enquiring into this Doctrine, in order to settle and confirm my Mind in a true and saving Faith. Therefore I resolv'd to go to the Fountain of Truth, the Word of God, to know his Will concerning my Belief; and determin'd to take with Me no other Guide but my own Reason, assisted I hope by the Spirit of God, and improv'd by the best Helps I had Opportunity to acquire. And I thought, the easiest and clearest Way to have all the Scriptures relating to this Doctrine at once before Me, wou'd be by considering them as they stood in the Reverend and Learned Dr Clarke's Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity. Which Book gave me this Advantage, I had ever wanted before; and which Method (certainly most to be approv'd of) I found the Schemes of our modern Divines very much deficient in. And this, I am perswaded, is one Reason of their so great Disagreement both with one another, and (as I now find) with the whole Tenour of Scripture. For after my most diligent and (I am sure) honest Enquiries into the Truth of this Doctrine, I am by the Mercy of God thoroughly and heartily perswaded, that the Faith concerning the ever-blessed Trinity once revealed and delivered to the Saints, and preserv'd entire and uncorrupt in the first and purest Ages of the Church, is contain'd in those Propositions, which Dr Clarke with great Reason and Learning hath deduc'd from Scripture; and in those Explanations which He hath given of the Liturgy of the Church of England. Having, by the Grace of God, and his learned and pious Endeavours,

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Endeavours, to overcome my former Prejudices, and been convinc'd of the Errors of my Faith, and brought (I trust) unto the true Knowledge of Jesus Christ my God and Saviour; I thought my self bound in Conscience to acknowledge my Spiritual Obligations to him on that Account, and to declare the Sense of the Benefits I believ'd my Soul had receiv'd by his Means; And this I did by Letters, to which He was pleas'd to return very kind Answers; which being made public, I hope may be of service to Others, either to enquire more seriously into the Truth of that Doctrine which this Great Man hath advanc'd for the Glory of God, and the Good of his Church; or to encourage them who are already inwardly convinc'd of the Truth of it, fully to declare their Minds, and so move the Rulers and Governours of the Church to admit of a calm and impartial Hearing, and, with zealous Concern only for Truth, enquire whether the Appeal this Doctrine makes to Scripture, be just or no. And if it be, then surely no fallible humane Authority will be heard in Opposition to the Doctrine of Christ and his inspir'd Apostles. And may the Blessed Spirit, which always presides in the Councils of holy Men met together to promote Gods Truth and Glory, direct and rule the Hearts of the August, Learned and Pious Body of the Convocation, to encourage and establish those invaluable Truths, which the Romish Church hath so long corrupted and abus'd to the undermining of our Common Christianity, and thereby maintaining (ad hominem) with

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too much seeming Reason, the Absurdities and Contradictions of their Great Idol, Transubstantiation. For it will ever be thought, that there is as much Piety in believing against Sense, as against Reason. And I hope the reforming whatever may be amiss in the receiv'd Explications of the Doctrine of the Trinity, will be a great Means of removing from the Church of Rome it self, (at least taking off all Pretence for continuing) that great and fatal Stumbling-Block in the Way of Christs Kingdom. I hope the Time will shortly come (if the Sins of Christians hinder it not,) when Christ will set up the pure and uncorrupt Kingdom of his Gospel, and rule over his Church in perfect Truth and Righteousness.



Farewell.

Three Letters

TO

Dr CLARKE

From a Clergyman &c.

LETTER the first.

To the Reverend Dr Clarke.

July 14, 1714.

SIR,

PErmit a Brother, but one who never had the Happiness of knowing or (I think) so much as seeing your Person; to return you his most Christian and hearty Thanks, for your very Learned and Judicious Book of the *Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity*, to which (by Gods Grace) I owe the present Settlement of my Mind in (I doubt not) the true Faith of the ever-blessed *Trinity*. I hope you will not think it impertinent in Me,

B

to

to give you an Account what Fate your Book undergoes in our Parts; and also how I came to be convinc'd by it. As soon as ever I heard your Book was publish'd, it was at the same Time generally spoken against. Some, thought it *Heretical*; but the most, and even wisest and best, dangerous. Such a Character as this, especially from some very Learned and Pious Friends of Mine, I confess, prejudic'd Me against it; I verily thought you had fallen into a great, if not damnable Error; and so I judg'd it not safe so much as to read your Book; but daily commended you in my Prayers to God, beseeching his Goodness and Mercy to enlighten your Understanding with the Light of his Gospel, and bring you back into the Way of his reveal'd Truth, from which I thought you were fallen. However, in about a Twelve-month after your Book came out, I found my self dispos'd to read and consider it. Upon the first reading of your Book, I was somewhat surpriz'd to find you charge That, which I took to be the Faith of our Church founded on Scripture, (and suppos'd to be prov'd by Dr *Bull* and Dr *Grabe*, to be the unanimous Sense of the Antient Church,) with a Contradiction: Especially, when I consider'd what you your self not many years before, had taught in your Second *Volume* of *Boyl's* *Lecture-Sermons*, never I think to be over-valued. Notwithstanding, upon Consideration of your *Reasons*, and Interpretations of several places of *Scripture*, and *Propositions* drawn from them;

them; I found my Conceptions, which before were very confus'd and unintelligible, (but made somewhat easy, because founded on the Scheme of such Great and Good Men as Bishop Pearson, Bishop Stillingfleet, Bishop Beveridge, Bishop Bull, Dr Barrow, Dr Whitby &c.) to clear up, and my Reason plac'd in a better Light; and was presently able to discern, that your Scheme was much more agreeable to it self throughout, and to Scripture interpreted by it self and the plainest and most undisguis'd Reason: And hence I began to think, that if my former Opinion did appear to be contrary to Reason, or Scripture, or both, that it would be my Duty to lay it aside, and embrace that which I should be convinc'd was Truth, even tho' the *Church of England* it self (which I most heartily love,) or even the *whole visible Church*, shou'd have determin'd against it. These Thoughts, and the Importance of the Subject, made me read your Book with a careful Attention, and I am sure with an upright and honest Mind, (for which I am not afraid to appeal to the Searcher of Hearts;) And not only so, but I also compar'd it, with the best Judgment I was able, to several other Schemes; Particularly, Bishop Stillingfleets, Dr Souths, and Dr Sherlocks. And indeed the *two last*, so contrary the *one* to the *other*, made me suspect they were *both* in the Wrong; and that a Faith defended by such opposite Explanations, was not well founded at the Bottom. I soon perceiv'd Dr South's Scheme unavoidably led to *Sabelli-*

anism ; and, with Dr *Sherlock*, to affirm three Equal Infinite Minds, I thought *Polytheism*. And then finding your Scheme *mediate* to both, I was very much led to believe you might be in the right. In short, upon a thoro' review of the Scriptures, in the Order and Light you plac'd them in, together with the Additional Illustrations of the Fathers and Councils, and the reasonable Propositions and Conclusions you built upon the whole ; I became at last thoroughly convinc'd, that *your* Scheme alone, of all that I had read, was the most agreeable to *Scripture* and *Reason*, and indeed no other than what I was perswaded Christ and his blessed Apostles taught. After I had thus duly weigh'd, and impartially consider'd, and entertain'd this Faith ; I carefully review'd it, to find what Imperfections there might possibly be in it. I consider'd whether it might be repugnant to any *other* Christian Doctrine, or liable to any just Exceptions from *Reason*. Upon a little Thought, I found it reconcileable to the Notion of the *Unity of God*, and the *Supreme Worship and Adoration* due to him ; and I think with *Novatian*, or the Author of the Book *De Trinitate*, that *duo aequales* (and those only) *Duos Deos reddidissent*. So that if any of your Adversaries object *Polytheism* against you, as I find some of my Neighbours, (I think) ignorantly, do ; it retorts more strongly on their own Heads from *their* Explication of a *Co-equality* of divine Persons, or else (as you rightly observe) runs them necessarily into

into *Sabellianism*. But a learned and pious Friend of mine, with whom I have conversed, press'd Me with several Objections: *viz.* that *Individual Consubstantiality* was a necessary Consequence of *Co-eternity*; which latter I could not deny that our Church receiv'd: But then I thought and told him, that I believ'd you did not deny the Son's *Eternity*; and, upon *Supposition* of it, I could not think *Individual Consubstantiality* a necessary Consequence. *Individual Consubstantiality* in three Persons, I thought was an evident Contradiction; but *Eternity*, especially as a Negative Idea, I thought was not. But upon further Examination of this Objection, I found that the *absolute positive Eternity* of the Son, was not in any *Express words* revealed in *Scripture*. The two Places urg'd out of the *Old Testament* by Some, I think do not prove it. The first is, *Isaiah* 9. 6. where the *Son of God* or the *Messiah* is by our Translators call'd the *everlasting Father*: But the Hebrew hath it אב עולם, which being plainly in *statu Constructo*, cannot so properly signify the *everlasting Father*, as the *Father of Eternity*. But because the word אב signifies as well *seculum* as *Eternitas*; and it is spoken prophetically of the *Messiah*, not what He always *Was*, but what He *hereafter should be call'd*; I humbly think the true signification is, that *He shall be call'd the Father of the Age which was to come*, *viz.* the Age of the *Messiah*. The second place, is *Micah* 5. 2. *whose goings forth have been from old,*

old, from everlasting : The Hebrew is עוֹלָם וָעוֹלָם. Here again, עוֹלָם signifies a *finite* time, as well as *Infinite*; and I think the word, *goings forth*, plainly determines it to the *finite* Sense; For by *goings forth*, I take the Prophet to mean the *manifestation* of the אֱלֹהִים; and then surely no one will say He *manifested* himself before the Creation of the World. The LXXII plainly understand it in this sense; not to take notice that *Days* cannot so properly be apply'd to *Eternity*, as to the *Ages of the World*. I may observe, what to be sure you know, with Respect to the *first* Citation; that both the Words, *everlasting Father*, and also *the mighty God*, are not in the *Septuagint*, if my *Daniel's* Edition be a good one. I was also press'd, with the *Infinity* of our Saviours Perfections: But tho' you say, *all divine Powers are given to the Son by the Father, excepting absolute Supremacy and Independency*; yet I suppose you do not mean those Powers to be in the Son as they are in the Father, (for *Infinity* in *that Sense* would include *Supremacy* and *Independency*;) but that they are infinite only as reveal'd *Relative* to us Creatures. For I humbly conceive that we conclude from *Reason* rather than *Revelation*, the *Metaphysical* or *Philosophical Infinity* of the Perfections even of God the Father himself. 'Tis enough that God reveals himself to have *all Power, Knowledge &c. over Us*, to oblige us to acknowledge him for our God, and to worship Him. And so I think it necessary to understand all the divine Attributes

butes communicated from God the Father to the Son, to be in such Sense only as *reveal'd* in Scripture and *relative* to Us, and not as our Reason necessarily concludes they must be absolutely in the one Supreme God. These are my present Thoughts; and if I be in an Error, I desire to be corrected by you. I have also been press'd to account for the *Satisfaction* of Sin upon this Hypothesis: I answered, that I saw no necessity in the *Nature* of things, (and the *Scripture* was silent in the matter,) that a Satisfaction for the Sins of a finite World, must be made by one whose Person is absolutely *Infinite*. I verily think that the Son of God our Creator, whether his Person be *Infinite* or no, (which Question must be determined by *Other* Arguments,) is a *Sufficient Propitiatory* for the Sins of his Creatures: And also that the *Infinite Guilt* of Sin does by no means follow from the Infinite Object, the Infinity of God the Father, against whom it is committed: But I should think it a great Happiness, to have *your* Thoughts of this matter. But one of the most *material* Objections I find made against you, (and which indeed *perplex* Me,) is, that the Son of God is in *Scripture* call'd God absolutely *with an Article*; for whether He is so call'd or no by any of the *Ancient Writers of the Church*, is not so material: But I find in your *Scripture-Doctrine*, that you deny that Christ is ever called God, *absolutely and by Way of Eminence*, in Scripture; And in your incomparable Answer to Mr. Nelson and

his Friend, you think also that He is not call'd so by *any Antient Writer*: This, I confess, was a great Stumbling-block in my Way, when I first read your Book; and I verily thought you had given away some Texts from the Son, which really belong'd to Him and prov'd this Point; especially *Rom. 9, 5; & 1 John 5, 20*. But, with respect to the *first*, what you observe, is plain; that Christ is not there call'd absolutely *God* so that I humbly think you need not scruple giving that Text to the Son of God, especially since it is apply'd to him by several Fathers according to the vulgar reading. As to the *latter Text*, my own farther Consideration, and what you have said in your Answer to Mr. Nelson's Friend, hath given me full Satisfaction, that That Text belongs to *God the Father*. But still, Sir, I find you are press'd with the Scriptures of the *Old Testament*, wherein the Title *יהוה* or *יהו* is undoubtedly challeng'd by the *Logos*, and apply'd to Him appearing at the Delivery of the Law: But then what you observe thereupon, is I think as little to be doubted; viz. that the *Logos* or *Memra* appear'd as the *Shechinah* of the Father, and represented his Person in the Delivery of the Law. And if this be not allow'd; besides what you have said to confirm it, I think it will plainly follow, that *God the Father* or *first Person* will not be properly or absolutely the *God of the Jews*, (which the new Testament fully asserts,) but *the Son*; and that the *Father* will be nothing concern'd in giving the Law; and

and also that hereby the *Old Testament* will be the *fullest* Revelation of the Divinity and Worship of the Son of God; and not only assert it in much *higher* Terms than the New, but even in Terms *contrary* to it: So that I readily embrace your Sense of the matter, and find no Difficulty in it. That which only remains to be somewhat clear'd by you, in my Opinion, is, to account for the Name *Jehovah* being given by the Prophets to the *Person of the Messiah*; as indeed I think it is, *Isai.* 40; 3, 10. & *Jer.* 23, 6; to name no other Places. Those Prophecies, I think, plainly relate to the Kingdom of the *Messiah*; and hence I conclude, that whatever I there find spoken of him, relates to his coming in *his own Person* and Character; and so, being the Name *Jehovah* is apply'd to him; I cannot but look upon it as belonging to *his Person* singly. This, I am sensible, looks something against what you have said in answer to the *Author of the Considerations*; and you seem to think, that whenever our Lord in the *Old Testament* is stiled *Jehovah*, it is only as the Angel of the Covenant, and the *Person in whom the Name of God was*: But, Sir, with great Submission to your Judgment, I think your Hypothesis will not suffer, though you should allow the Name *Jehovah* to be given to the *Messiah* in his own *Person*. For whether this be a Name of the *Existence* of God, (as several of the *Jews* expound it,) as He hath *Life in himself*, and is the *Author of it to all others*; yet still it is plain He hath given to the

Son to have *Life in Himself*, and to be the *Author of it to all his Creatures* : Or whether it be best expounded by *St. John*, by the Phrase *αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας* : yet even this doth not seem necessarily to imply more than the *Alpha and Omega* plainly given to our Saviour by the same Apostle : Or thirdly, if, as the *Hebrews* teach, (saith *Mr Ainsworth*, *Exod. 3. 13.*) it be a Name denoting the Attribute of the *Mercy of God*, (as in *Exod. 34. 6.* he is called, *Jehovah, Jehovah, God merciful and gracious*;) and also implies the *Unchangeableness* of his Nature, and the *Constant Performance of his Word and Promises*, (on which Account *Mr Ainsworth* thinks He is said not to be known by this Name to the *Fathers* of the *Jews*, to *Abraham*, &c. because *They* liv'd by *Faith* in *God's Almighty Power*, without receiving the thing promised; but their *Children*, upon Performance of the Promises to *Them* by their Deliverance &c. were made sensible of his Name *Jehovah*;) If This (I say) be the true Interpretation of the Name *Jehovah*, yet still I think our Saviour may challenge it, who in *Heb. 13. 8.* is called *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*; and in whom all *Gods Promises* are *yea and Amen*, *2 Cor. 1. 20*; who having fulfilled all *Gods Promises* for our Redemption, manifesteth himself by this Name in the Interpretation thereof; See *Mr Ainsworth*, *Exod. 6. 3.* So that I think it not necessary for you, in order to avoid giving the Son of God the Self-existent or Unbegotten Nature

Nature of the Father, to deny that He is in his own Person *Jehovah*: For I think the Word doth not necessarily denote the *underived Nature* of the Supreme God; Nay, I am perfectly of your Opinion that the Word *God*, (and I will add, *Jehovah* too,) are *relative Names*, and denominate God's *Attributes with respect to Us*; and that He hath not any where in Scripture reveal'd himself by the Name of his *Infinite, Independent, Self-existent Nature*. I think those that insist so much, upon having the Name *Jehovah* apply'd to the *Son of God* in his own Person; and yet signifying by it, the *one necessary Self-existent Being or God*; manifestly prove too much, and that is *nothing at all*. For if the Son be *Jehova* in *That Sense*, He must be *Self-existent*, which is a Contradiction to his *Generation*. So that the Consequence plainly is; either that the Son is not call'd *Jehova* at all, in his own Person; or if He is, then the Name *Jehova* cannot mean so much as *necessary Self-Existence*, but something which *may be Communicated*. Give me leave to observe, that the Learned Rabby *Elias Hutterus Germanus*, in his Translation of the New Testament into Hebrew, industriously avoids translating the word *Lord* (when apply'd to *Christ*) by *Jehova*, but always by *Adonai*; but when the word is apply'd to *God the Father*, he translates it by *Jehova*. Which I think is an Argument, that this Learned Rabby thought the word *Jehova* cou'd not properly be apply'd to the Person of the *Son of God*; and so by Consequence understood the

Jehovah, when apply'd to the λόγος in the Old Testament, in the sense which you do. But now in the last place, I cannot help telling you, that I dissent from your Opinion, when you think that no Antient Writer calls the Son of God, God absolutely, with an Article. Clemens Romanus, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, § 2d, hath these Words, which I think cannot be apply'd to any Person but Christ: *viz*: τοῖς ἐφοδίοις τοῦ θεοῦ ἀρξάμενοι, καὶ προσέχοντες τὴν λόγον αὐτοῦ, ἐπιμαλῶς ὑποτασσόμενοι ἡ τοῖς σπασάγγχοις, καὶ τὰ παθήματα αὐτοῦ ἢν περὶ ὁδοῦ λαμβάνοντες. *Ex Testamentis 12 Patriarcharum*, 1^{mo} in Testamento Simeonis, Pag. 156, Κύριος ὁ θεὸς παῖδας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, φαινόμενος ἐπὶ γῆς ὡς ἄνθρωπος. &c. & pag. 157, ὁ θεὸς σῶμα λαβὼν. In Annot. ad Cap. 4. D. Bulli de τῷ ὁμολογίῳ, Dr Grabe citeth these Words out of Justin Martyr in his Dialogue with Trypho, ὅτι ὁ χριστὸς ὁ θεὸς ἐστίν. In Annot. ad Cap. 5. de S. Irenæo, Dr Grabe citeth these Words, ὁ θεὸς ἦν ἄνθρωπος ἐγένετο, &c. *Ex Fragmentis sancti Melitonis Sardenfis*, Dr. Grabe citeth these Words, ὁ θεὸς πέποιθεν ὑπὸ διξίᾳς Ἰσραηλίδος. Dr Grabe, in his Annot. ad Cap. 6. D. Bulli, § 2. de Hippolyto, quoteth these Words, τὸ δὲ πᾶσα ἡμῶν ὑπερβαλὼν ἐδόθη χριστὸς ὁ θεός, 1 Cor. 5, 7. Which ὁ θεός, tho' not in the Original Text, yet shows that Hippolytus thought Christ might be call'd ὁ θεός. *E Bibleotheca Patrum Tom. 11 Pag. 290*, Dr. Bull citeth these Words of Dionysius Alexandrinus, Κύριος ὁ θεός Ἰσραὴλ, Ἰησοῦς ὁ χριστός. Ignat. epist. ad Smyr. διὰ τοῦτο Ἰησοῦν χριστὸν τὸν θεόν. But this last I think of no Authority, as doubting the genuineness of these lesser Epistles. If you think any thing

thing amiss in these Thoughts of mine, I desire you to correct them. Thus, Sir, I have ingenuously open'd to you my Thoughts of your Book, and of the Doctrine it contains; and I heartily bless God for the Opportunity of reading and being convinc'd by it. I have freely declar'd my Self to some of my *Brethren*, who are of a different Opinion: In debating with whom, I have only this Satisfaction, that tho' they are not of my Mind, they cannot answer my Arguments, or give sufficient Reason for their Opinion, in Opposition to mine. I have few near me, either to assist or advise Me; and therefore hope you will not despise this Letter. And as I am perswaded that what you have advanc'd, is the Truth of God, so I hope to live to see it favourably receiv'd by the Church, when God shall vouchsafe to enlighten all our Understandings with the knowledge of his Revelation, and to work a perfect Reformation in his Church. I rejoyce to see *one ingenious Clergyman* has wrote in your Defense; but on the other hand, am sorry to hear that the Learned and pious Body of the Convocation have thought fit to censure you. But as I am perswaded those things do not move *you*, who well know how to bear Reproofs for Christ sake; so they do not in the least shake *my* Perswasion in your Doctrine. I verily believe you have the *Truth of God* in your *Heart*, and that no one is better able to defend it. Give me leave to say, all your Adversaries are much inferior to you in Point of Reason; and
I think

I think none will ever appear, but which you will easily *confute*, if not *convince*. I am sensible how tedious I have been to you; and for that, beg Pardon; which, for my Sincerity, I hope you will easily grant. It is too much for me to ask the Favour of a Letter from you; but perhaps not more, than your Goodness and Condescension will incline you to do. And since I have undertaken to write my Mind to you, I desire leave to make an Observation or two on the pious and learned, but unfortunate, Mr *Whiston*. In General therefore, I think you have carefully and prudently avoided those Rocks, on which he hath almost split. Though I cannot but think his fourth Volume of *Primitive Christianity*, highly worth the learned Readers studying; yet I heartily wish he had not so much favour'd the *Arians*, as with them to *affirm* that the *Son of God* is *Created*. I verily think He hath not prov'd this Assertion from the Scriptures. His chief Text from the *Proverbs* will not do, when the Hebrew is carefully examin'd; and he knows the great and learned *Eusebius*, to name no more, did not understand it in his Sense. I also think He is *too positive* in denying the *Eternity* of the Son of God, and too short in proving That also from Scripture. And with respect to the *Apollinarian* Scheme, I fear He hath mistaken the Fathers, or at least drawn no good Argument from their *tripartite* division of a Man. Their Philosophy, he must know, was very imperfect; and I can by no means

means believe any more than *One thinking Substance* in Man, which is not only a *Sensitive* but *Rational Soul*. I think His Scheme would have been as coherent, upon the Supposition of only *one Soul* in Man, which the $\lambda\gamma\theta$ might supply; or, else, if the Scripture cannot be clear'd without supposing an *Humane Soul* in Christ, why might not the $\lambda\gamma\theta$ be so united to it with the Body, as to be affected by it? I for my Part dare not determine any Way in this Point, being not satisfy'd about it. Your Thoughts on this matter would be a great satisfaction to my Mind.

I am, Sir, your most

obliged Friend and Affectionate

Brother, &c.

POSTSCRIPT.

I have seen a Letter under the hand of the Great Mr *Chillingworth* upon This Subject; wherein he differs from the vulgar Explanations, altogether as much as You do.

Dr

Dr Clarke's ANSWER
to the fore-going Letter.

London, July 22d. 1714.

S I R,

I Am very thankful to God for the effect My
Indeavours (though not personally known
to you) have had upon you ; and I can ne-
ver sufficiently commend your Courage, in
acknowledging it as you have done.

Concerning the *Eternity of the Son*, you
have made very judicious Observations. The
Notion is not indeed *clearly* revealed in Scrip-
ture ; but it seems most probable that God
(ὁ πατήρ αἰώνιος) did *Always* exercise in some man-
ner or other, his *Eternal Power and Will*. I
think your Explication of אֱלֹהֵי (Isa. 9,
6.) exactly right: πατήρ μέλλωντος αἰῶνος, is not in-
deed in *Daniel's* Edition of the LXX ; but 'tis
in the best Copies, in *Aldus's*, in the *Complu-
tensian*, and in the *Alexandrian MS* ; as you
will find observed by Dr *Mills* upon *Heb. 2, 5*.
But if the Hebrew word *did* signify Eternity,
yet *such an Eternity* as I am now speaking of,
does by no means infer *Individuality of Exis-
tence* with the Father. As to the Question
concerning the *Infinity* of our Saviours Perfec-
tions ; I think there is no danger of diminish-
ing

ing the *True Honour* of the *Father*, (which is the *first* Commandment, and the *first* Article of the Creed;) if it be carefully observed, that with each one of the *Attributes* of the *Father* there be always understood to be connected the *Notion* of *Supreme and Independent*; but that the *Titles* ascribed to the *Son*, must always carry along with them the *Idea* of being *communicated or derived*. Thus, for Example, when *All Power* is ascribed to the *Father*; 'tis manifest it must be understood absolutely of *Power Supreme and Independent*: But when the *Son* is affirmed to have *All Power*, it must always be understood (and indeed in Scripture it is generally express'd) to be *derived to him from the Supreme Power and Will of the Father*. Again; when the *Father* is said to *create the World*, it must always be understood, that He of his own original *Power* created it by the *Son*: But when the *Son* is said to *create the World*, it must be understood that He created it by the *Power of the Father*.

The *Notion* of *Sins* being *infinite*, upon account of the *infinite Object* against whom they are committed; directly makes *all Sins equal*: and is therefore so manifestly absurd, that I wonder any reasonable Men should build their *Notion* of *Satisfaction* upon it. *Satisfaction* cannot be proved to be *in it self and in the Nature of things, necessary*: But what the *offended Person* thinks fit to *require* and to *accept*, That's the true *Satisfaction*.

I do not at all scruple applying that Text, *Rom. 9, 5*, to the *Son of God*: But there being some Variety in the Reading, and some Ambiguity in the Construction; 'tis fit the Reader should have Notice of it, and judge for himself.

In the passages, *Isa. 40; 3, 10*, I see no impropriety in supposing the prophetick expression to foretell, that *God himself* will do That, which in the Event he does *by his Son*: 'Tis the style which runs through the whole Bible. The other passage, *Jer. 23, 6*, *Jehovah-Tsidkenu*, the Lord our Righteousness, proves no more (in point of Argument) than even the Names of Places, *Jehovah-jireh*, *Jehovah-Shammah*, *Jehovah-Shalom*, *Jehovah-Nissi*, &c. However, I agree with you, that the Name *Jehovah*, if allowed to be given to the Messiah in his own Person, needs not signify *Self-existence*, and indeed cannot do so without proving too much. What you have written upon This Head, is so just and right, that I cannot add any thing to it.

As to the passages in *Old Writers*, wherein Christ seems to be stiled *ὁ Θεός*; you will be so candid as to remember, that I laid in a caution against being too positive in an *universal negative*; and cited one place my self out of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, wherein the Father and Son are said to be *ὁ Θεός, ὁ Θεός*. Yet I think that *This*, and even *all the other Passages* you cite, may easily be accounted for. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, at his first Conversion, was plainly a *Sabellian*; as appears in his

his first Writings: But in his *Stromatēs*, he constantly speaks otherwise. In *Clemens Romanus*, the words *ἰσοδούς τῷ θεῷ*, seem to me (according to that Authors perpetual style) necessarily to signify *the Father*: τὰ παθὴματα αὐτοῦ, which follows after, is either corrupt for *χριστοῦ*; or else it is such a transition, as you may find in the five first Verses of the 3d ch. of the first Epistle of St. *John*. Indeed in the earliest Writers, αὐτός and ἕκτος, do frequently mean *Christ*, when used without any Antecedent at all. The *Testaments of the twelve Patriarchs*, is a spurious Book, written by a *Sabellian* Author: The Writers on which side, were styled antiently *Patricians*; not that they really believe *the Father suffered*, but their Opponents charged them with That, as a Consequence of their Doctrine: For I suppose They themselves meant only *God in Christ*, in some such manner as the *Socinians* do now: So that κύριος ὁ θεὸς μέγας τῷ Ἰσραὴλ ομιλούμενος ἐν τῇ γῆς ὡς ἀνθρώπος, means *God the Father in Christ*. The words of *Justin Martyr* cited by Dr *Grabe*, ἅτε ἔχεις ὁ θεὸς ὦν, are very sorry ones indeed, and show how injudicious a Man, (though I believe very honest,) Dr *Grabe* was: For *Justin Martyr* is there arguing, that *Joshua* could lead the Jews, only into the *Temporal*, not into the *eternal* inheritance, ἅτε ἔχεις ὁ θεὸς ὦν, ἔτι υἱὸς τῷ θεῷ, as being neither *Christ who is God*, nor the *Son of God*. Which words, (besides the contrariety of ὁ θεὸς in that place to *Justin Martyr's* Style,) are they not plainly a Tautology, and no Sense at all? I think they should be read thus, ἅτε ἐκ αὐτοῦ

ὁ θεὸς ὢν, ὁ πατὴρ τῷ θεῷ, *as being neither God himself, nor the Son of God*: Consider the whole Passage, and judge. In the Passage of *Irenaeus*, cited again by poor *Dr Grabe*, ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἐγένετο, the words ὁ θεὸς are *not* put *absolutely*; but, referring to *Christ*, who had been at large described in the fore-going Sentence, they are plainly the same as if the Author had said, ὁ ἐν αὐτῷ θεὸς ἐγένετο ἀνθρώπος. The Passages out of *Hippolytus*, *Melito*, and *Dionysius Alexandrinus*, are all out of Books evidently forged, so as to express Notions very different from the Opinion of the Authors themselves: And are to be understood in the same manner, as That out of the *Testament of the twelve Patriarchs*. In the passage of *Ignatius*, χριστὸν τὸν θεόν, the word ὁ θεὸς is *not absolute*, but only the same as χριστὸν ὅς ἐστι θεός: For, in This manner of construction, it may be used even of *false God's*, Βααλ ὁ θεός, or, ὁ θεός Βααλ, or, ὁ θεός ἀμμοριτῶν, &c. After all, it is sufficient that the Scripture is clear in this point, however some other Writers may possibly have spoken.

The *Tripartite* Division of a Man, I understand not. And as to the *Apollinarian* Notion; on which side soever That Question (in which there are many and great Difficulties) be determined, it makes No Alteration at all in My Scheme: For which reason, to avoid all *needless* Difficulties, I neither affirmed nor supposed any thing in any of my Books, which will not hold equally true upon either Hypothesis. Indeed, *All* Questions merely speculative, ought to be looked upon as of *smaller moment*: Nor would

would I *indeavour* in such matters, (if I had never so much *Power*,) to *impose* My own Opinion upon any Man. Could the Protestant World but have courage, to part *only with things Confessedly spurious*; and, in point of *Practise*, (*quod est omnis controversiæ Caput*,) be content with what is *Antient* and *Unexceptionable upon all Hypotheses*, (as the *first Reformers* would certainly have done; had *Greek Learning* been at That Time restored as *Latin* was;) All Debates about *speculative matters* might either well be laid aside, or (like other points of Learning) be continued without any injury to Religion or Charity. The *Peace* and *Unity* of the Church, can be secured but *Two Ways*: either by that of *Charity*, and allowing learned men a *Liberty of examining things*; which is the Protestant and Christian Method: Or by introducing with Force an *Universal Ignorance*; which is the Method of *Popery*.

I am, Sir,

Your affectionate Friend, &c.

A

Second LETTER

to Dr CLARKE.

October 10. 1714.

SIR,

I Return you my hearty Thanks for your kind Letter of the 31st of July, which hath given me *abundant satisfaction* in every Thing I desir'd. I am glad that you approve of my Zeal for that Cause which you have undertaken; and of the Truth of which being perswaded, I thought my self in Conscience bound to defend it. I did not know that the *Septuagint* had render'd the Hebrew (אֲבִי-עַד) by *πάλαι μίλλοντος αἰῶνος*, but now by your Directions am satisfy'd of it; and of the Truth of that Interpretation which I thought the Hebrew might very well bear. What you observe concerning the *Satisfaction for Sin*, I believe to be most true; and indeed had been inform'd from Dr. *Whitby's Appendix to the 1st Chapter of the 2^d Epistle to the Thessalonians*, of the Absurdity of the Proposition of Sin being Infinite in it's Demerit, upon Account of the Infinite Object against which it is committed; but desir'd your Judgment

Judgment as to the true State of the Matter, which in a few VVords you have clearly given Me. As to *Isai.* 40; 3 & 10, I cannot but agree with you, that (according to the Stile of Scripture) there is no Impropriety in your Interpretation of the Prophetic Expressions: And it is very plain that the Apostles themselves do apply to *Christ* Passages of the Old Testament undoubtedly meant primarily and originally of *God the Father*, for this Reason, because whatsoever *God* [*ὁ παντοκράτωρ*] does, That He does *by his Son* &c. Which I think you very justly observe, and it is manifest in several Particulars, as *Creating the World, giving the Law, Inspiring of Prophets, working of Miracles, redeeming of Mankind, raising the Dead, and judging all Men.* But tho' the greatest Divines will allow This, that the *λόγος* represents the Person of the *Jehova*, or that *God the Father* acts by his Son; yet when the Prophets speak of the Kingdom of the *Messiah*, they will understand them as therefore applying to *Jehovah* those Things which in the Event are perform'd by the *Messiah*, that they might show the *Messiah* to be *Jehova* in his own Person; And thence I thought, that if you *was oblig'd to yield* That Point, the *Jehova* must bear an Interpretation which did not infer the Person invested with that Name, to be the absolute self-existent Being or *God*; Wherein you agree with Me: And I, upon Consideration, agree with you, that you are *not indeed oblig'd to yield so much*; since from the New Testament it is evident, that

that all the High Things spoken of the Jehova in the Old Testament, are revealed to be the Acts of God *the Father by his Son*; and therefore, when the Prophets, speaking of the Kingdom of the Messiah, attribute any Thing to Jehova which was done by Christ, this may *very well* be understood (as you say) of the absolute Jehova or God *the Father*, acting by his Son Jesus Christ. And in This Sense, Jehova may be said to *manifest himself and come unto his People*, according to that of our Saviour, *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*: And the sufferings of the Messiah, may be stiled the sufferings of Jehovah; as they seem to be, *Zeck. 12, 10.* And to strengthen this, I may observe, that where *the Lord absolutely Jehovah* is spoken of in the same Sentence with *the Lord the Messiah*, there is a plain Difference in the Prophetic stile; the first Person, or God *ὁ πᾶς ὁπᾶς ὁπᾶς*, being call'd *Jehovah*; the Second, or the Messiah, *Adon*; As is to be seen in *Psaln 110, 1*; and *Malach. 3, 1*. I acknowledge the Weakness of any Argument drawn from *Jer. 23, 6*, to prove the Messiah absolutely Jehovah in his own Person, any more than the Title of Emmanuel proves him to be absolutely *ὁ θεός*. I did remember and consider what you had given in Caution against being too Positive in an universal Negative; and also your Citation out of *Clemens Alexandrinus*; which was the Reason that I took no Notice of that Place, or indeed any one in his *Padagogue*, as with you believing him to be

be a *Sabellian* when he wrote that Book, speaking indeed much otherwise in his *Stromatous*: All I intended, was to offer *my* then Thoughts against what you delivered only as *your* Thoughts; in order to be better inform'd: At the same time believing you was well aware of all the Places I shou'd or cou'd name, and had an Answer ready for them; which indeed I had a Mind to know, and cou'd not otherwise satisfy my self. The Epistle of *Clemens Romanus* I have thoroughly consider'd, and am now convinc'd, that (according to that Author's perpetual stile) the Words *ἰσοϋς τῷ θεῷ* must necessarily be understood of the *ἰπεριονον* as *Clemens* loves to call *God the Father*, never stiling the Son of God so much as barely *θεός*: And the great Critic *Photius* is plainly of this Opinion, who taxes *Clemens* for speaking less magnificently of the Son of God; Which *Photius* wou'd never have done, had he understood that Expression to be meant of Christ: For the same *Photius* readily observes, that *Clemens* in the second Epistle, accounted Spurious, speaks of Christ as God, in the beginning of it. When I wrote to you, I was aware of the Interpretation which you have given of *καὶ ὁμοῦς αὐτῷ*, by a Transition from one Person to another, agreeably to the Place you mention'd in *St John*; but I did not propose it, because I cannot find any Instance of the like Expression in *Clemens's* whole Epistle, and so fear'd it might not be approv'd: But I verily believe the pas-

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sage is corrupt, and that ~~and~~ is either (as you observe) put for ~~χρῆσις~~, or ~~καθίσταται~~ for ~~καθίσταται~~; either of which Emendations, gives a fair and rational Account of the Place. I am satisfy'd with your Judgment of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, and believe them to be written, or at least interpolated, by some *Sabellian* Author; and am oblig'd to you for your Sense of the *Sabellian* Phrases, which I very much approve of. Upon Consideration of the whole Passage of *Justin Martyr*, I am much *asham'd* of the Words I offer'd to you upon the Authority of *Dr Grabe*; which I did indeed without consulting the Original at that Time, having it not then by Me; and so find my self *impos'd upon* by that great and good Man: The Correction which you offer, I think very just, and necessary. I confess my self guilty of the same Charge of relying too much on that Learned Man in the Passage of *Irenaeus*, wanting the Opportunity of consulting the Original; but I shall be more cautious for the future. I am satisfy'd with your Account of the Passages of *Hippolitus*, *Melito*, and *Dionysius Alexandrinus*; and also confess my self in an Error as to the Place of *Ignatius*. I will here take the Opportunity of desiring you to correct, what I fear may be a mistake in my former Letter. I said, that I believ'd the Word *Jehova* as well as *Gods*, was a *relative* Name; But I must confess, I do not find that the Name *Jehova* is any where in the Old Testament joyn'd with a *relative* Term. Where there

there is mention of *our Lord*, as twice in the 8th Psalm; or, *thy Lord*, as once in the 45th Psalm, 12 Verse; it is express'd by *Adon*, with an Affix or Pronoun. There is indeed frequent mention of *Jehoua Sabaoth*, or the *Lord of Hosts*; but whether those Expressions be sufficient to denominate it a *Relative Term*, I am doubtful. If the Name be not relative, I am sensible that what I have drawn from *Psalms 110, 1*, will be weakened; but still the Place in *Malachy*, will stand good. I am heartily willing, as I know you are, (and this brought Me first into a good Opinion of your Book,) that the Doctrine you maintain, should be try'd by the *Scripture* and the *Scripture only*: being at the same Time really perswaded, that as it is most agreeable to *Reason*, so the notions defended in Opposition to yours, are contrary to it: And I am also no less perswaded, that the *Orthodox Fathers* of the *three first Century's* (however ambiguously and obscurely they may sometimes express themselves,) are yet generally on *your Side*. The manner of the Proceedings in Convocation, doth really seem to Me to carry with it a secret Acknowledgement of the Truth of your Doctrine. I wonder those holy and learned Men, not denying your Interpretation of Scripture, nor the Truth of any of your Propositions, upon which your Exposition of the Liturgy is plainly founded; should not conclude that your Explications, (however *uncatholic* they may seem to be,) ought to be receiv'd as most *agreeable to Truth*, tho' not entirely

entirely agreeing with what some great Divines have deliver'd for the meaning of the Compilers of it. But I hope the Time will shortly come, if our Sins hinder it not, when God will manifest the Truth to the Minds of all good Men. I cannot forbear acquainting you, that some Friends of mine, upon reading your Book, and my Considerations with them upon it, have declar'd themselves perswaded of the Truth of it; and others have owned themselves to me to have been Always of the same Mind, tho' they car'd not publickly to declare it. I lately read a Piece design'd in answer to you by Mr *Potter* of *Emmanuel College in Cambridge*; wherein he seems to think that he hath said something in Favour of what is vulgarly call'd Orthodoxy, which may deserve your Consideration: But give me leave to say, that I wonder why he shou'd think that he hath done any Thing towards clearing the Absurdities charg'd upon that Notion he defends against you; And all his Reasonings, as far as they are intelligible, are already obviated or answer'd by you. I really think, what he maintains, is so confus'd and absurd, that it differs nothing from the *Jargon of the Schoolmen*: And whilst he wou'd avoid asserting the Three divine Persons to be only Three *Modes of Subsistence* in the same Numerical Substance, as *Sabellianism*; his Reasonings necessarily and unavoidably infer it. And I cannot but make this Remark on This Gentleman, and all such; that I am perswaded, did not Prejudice and the

the *Pretence* of Church-Authority darken and almost blind their Understandings in their Enquiries into the Truth of this Doctrine, they wou'd soon be convinc'd even from their own Reasonings, that what they endeavour to clear from a Contradiction, is really and apparently so. I suppose, the cause why you have not in a strict and Philosophical Method of Reasoning, shewn the Contradiction of affirming three Divine Persons in the same *individual, identical, Substance*; is, because you think it so *Self-evident*, that the common Reason of all who consider it impartially, must necessarily conclude it.

I am Sir,

Your affectionate Brother &c.

Dr.

Dr Clarke's ANSWER

to the fore-going Letter.

October 23. 1714.

S I R,

WHAT you observe concerning Zech. 12. 10, I can easily allow in the sense you explain your self. And yet since St John cites it thus, *They shall look on HIM whom they have pierced*; and in Zech. himself, the very next Words are, *they shall mourn for HIM*; I am apt to think that the Word *ME* is an Errour of the Transcribers, the difference in *Hebrew* being only *אני* and *הוא*.

In the Passage of *Justin*, if any one is not satisfied with the Emendation *αὐτός* for *χριστός*; it may otherwise very naturally be conjectured, that against the Words *ὁὖς τῷ κυρίῳ*, some Scribe wrote in the Margin *χριστός*, and thence the next Transcriber inserted it into the Text before the Words *ὁ θεός*. Whoever reads and considers the whole Passage, will think either of these Emendations probable, and that One of them is certain.

Whether the Word *Jehovah*, be ever used in the *Hebrew* Language as a *Relative*, or only as a *Proper Name*; is, I think, of no great Moment in the present Question. Either way, it may well

well be given to *Christ* in the *Old Testament*, appearing as the *Visible Representative* of the *Invisible Father*.

Three Persons, that is, Three *Intelligent Agents*, in the same *individual, identical*, Substance; is so *self-evident* a Contradiction, that I think no *Reasoning* can make it plainer than *Intuition*. Besides, I have all along chosen to insist *more largely* upon *SCRIPTURE*, than upon *natural Reason*; because the Great popular Objection against Men that Think seriously and carefully about these Things, is, that they are apt to adhere to their own *Reason* more than to the *Scripture*: which is a most unjust Suggestion.

I cannot here but take notice, that the *Nicene Fathers*, by the Word *ὁμοούσιον*, evidently did not mean, of one *individual identical* Substance. For since they say in their Creed, *ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς, τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχον τὴν οὐσίαν τὸν πατέρα*, 'tis evident they thought *πατὴρ* and *οὐσία τοῦ πατρὸς*, to be the same; and consequently *υἱὸς* and *οὐσία τοῦ υἱοῦ* being the same likewise, it follows that the *οὐσία τοῦ υἱοῦ* is, according to Them, begotten *ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς*: Which is inconsistent with the Notion of one *identical* Substance.

I am, Sir,

Your affectionate Friend, &c.

A

A
Third LETTER
 to Dr CLARKE

Nov. 1st. 1714.

Reverend Sir,

I Receiv'd your last very kindly. Your Thoughts on the Place of *Zeck.* are very reasonable, the *whole Verse* and the Citation of *Sr John* being consider'd; tho' it must be confess'd that the Apostles do not always keep to the *express Words* of the Scriptures they cite, but the *Sense*. I am *fully satisfy'd* and oblig'd to you for your Criticisms on the Passage of *Justin Martyr*. If the Word *Jehova* is not *Relative*, I am apt to believe there is no more meant by the word *Sabaoth*, than that, being a plural Substantive of the Genitive Case, it is put for an Adjective; which you know is very common in the Hebrew Language: As, an *Husband of Bloods* for a *Bloody Husband*, *Exod.* 4; 25, 26. A *Knife of Flints or Edges*, for a *Sharp Knife*, *Josh.* 5, 2, &c. And so, the *Lord of Hosts*, or of *Powers*, is the same with *the all-powerful* or *all-mighty Lord*: And accordingly the *Septuagint* frequently render it by *παντοκράτωρ*. And tho', in the
 New

New Testament, the Apostle St. Paul, *Rom. 9. 29.* and St. James, *1st. 5. 4.* retain the Word *Sabaoth*; Yet St. John, *Rev. 4. 8.* expresseth it by *israēl*; So that it may be thought as a proper Name, in Construction with an Adjective. *Buxtorf* upon the Word, doth not help us in this Matter; And as you well observe, it is, I think, neither way, of any great moment in the present Question. When God's good Time shall be come, to cause his Church to flourish in Righteousness, Truth, and Charity; I should rejoice to see you on the *Episcopal Throne*.



I am, Sir,
Your most obliged Friend,

and affectionate Brother, &c.

S. I. N. I. F.

(88)
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